CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE SIX HUNDRED AND SIXTY-SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 27 January 1994, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Gérard Errera (France)

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The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I declare open the 667th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

I intend to begin, if you will allow me, by calling on the speakers on the list for this meeting, and then to consider the new requests from non-member States wishing to participate in our work for this session.

On my list of speakers for today I have the representatives of the Netherlands, Germany, Ukraine, Egypt, Senegal and Argentina. Consequently, I give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands, Ambassador Wagenmakers.

Mr. WAGENMAKERS (Netherlands) (translated from French): It is a great honour, Sir, to address the Conference on Disarmament at the beginning of its work for this year under the guidance and inspiration of your presidency. You are a son of France, a great nation, a State with which my own enjoys close relations by virtue of so many ties that it would be impossible for me to enumerate them all here this morning. I wish you good luck and Godspeed. My Government and I have every confidence that you will bring your work to the desired conclusion with great skill. I assure you of my fullest support and that of my delegation.

(continued in English)

Allow me also to express my deep appreciation and respect to your predecessor, Ambassador Mounir Zahran of Egypt, for his leadership during a long and demanding presidency in which he competently and tenaciously carried out his difficult and delicate tasks.

I would like to salute our new Secretary-General, Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, concurrently Personal Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General. The Netherlands also warmly welcomes Deputy Secretary-General Abdelkader Bensmail. I would like to take this opportunity to say farewell to esteemed colleagues who have recently taken up other duties. Ambassador Arteaga of Venezuela and Ambassador Semichi of Algeria. I wish them every success in their new activities. At the same time let me welcome the Ambassadors who have recently joined the Conference on Disarmament, Ambassador Meghlaoui of Algeria, Ambassador Lampreia of Brazil, Ambassador Ibrahim Omar of Ethiopia, Ambassador Tarre Murzi of Venezuela and Ambassador Vattani of Italy. It is heartening to note that our colleague El Ghali Benhima of Morocco has rejoined the ranks of the CD.

At the outset of my statement today, I would like to recall briefly the evolving international framework for our present-day priorities. I will then address issues concerning the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, notably chemical and biological weapons, nuclear weapons, and the role of the CD with a view to achieving a nuclear test ban and a prohibition of the production of fissile materials. The third part of my statement concerns another priority matter, the transparency process and conventional

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arms transfers. Also, I will touch on some organizational aspects of our work, notably those concerning negative security assurances. Finally some words on the important membership issue.

It was General de Gaulle who said in his book Le Fil de l'Epée that "international laws have no value without troops. Whatever direction the world takes, it will not manage without arms". This is only too true.

The Conference on Disarmament is starting its 1994 session in a climate where in some parts of the world prospects for progress and reconciliation have emerged. At the same time international uncertainty and instability continue in other parts. Freedom and stability are prerequisites for durable and comprehensive development, but, sadly, they are still lacking in too many parts of the world. In his intervention before this forum on 3 June last year, the Netherlands Minister for Foreign Affairs stated some basic premises of the Netherlands Government's approach to international security.

> "In the view of the Netherlands, freedom and stability go hand in hand. Long-term stability is only conceivable in an environment defined by democratic political systems, free-market economies, social justice, respect for human rights, and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Dealing with regional conflicts is next to impossible if one does not tackle head-on the underlying causes of conflict. In the long run, no State can afford to isolate itself completely from events taking place in other parts in the world. Brutal aggression, repression, 'ethnic cleansing', whether they occur in Cambodia, the Middle East, Europe, Africa or anywhere else, inevitably affect us all, if only because they undermine stability. Stability is essential to security. And without security, there will be no rule of law and no sustained economic development."

Since my Minister addressed the Conference, this pattern of concomitant hope and distress has continued worldwide. I refrain from enumerating once again all examples of distress, whether in the form of brutal aggression, repression or "ethnic cleansing". Rather, I would draw on more positive developments.

There is clear evidence that the international community is coming to grips with long-outstanding problems in certain parts of the world. The United Nations operations in Cambodia are proving to be a success. There are prospects for reconciliation and peace in the Middle East after the milestone agreement between Israel and the PLO in Washington in September last year. The Geneva meeting between Presidents Clinton and Assad seems to have further broken old stalemates. In Europe we witness historic transformations. The shape of a new security architecture is clearly developing, based on principles of freedom and stability. A new climate of long-term cooperation has emerged, a Partnership for Peace, the invitation to which was issued recently by the heads of State and government participating in the NATO summit meeting. Such a partnership is essential if durable stability is to be secured and prospects for a sustained transition to modern economic and social systems are to be fulfilled.

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In relation to disarmament and international security, last year's General Assembly certainly produced many tangible results, with consensus resolutions on a number of nuclear items and on the work of the First Committee itself, an overdue but very welcome appreciation of changing circumstances.

It is against the backdrop of this evolving international framework that the priorities of the arms control and disarmament agenda for the 1990s have to be determined.

A major result in completing that agenda for the 1990s was the recent signing of the chemical weapons Convention in Paris. The process of ratification of the Convention is proceeding smoothly in several States. Meanwhile, the Preparatory Commission for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons is doing its utmost to ensure that the mechanisms for compliance with the Convention will be ready on time. During last year's General Assembly it was therefore disheartening to see that certain States, and amongst them even members of this Conference, were displaying a less than responsible attitude towards the chemical weapons Convention. If we agree, as we surely all do, that the promise of the Convention cannot be delivered unless all its signatories respect the integrity of its provisions, then there should be no repetition of the unfortunate debates which marred the draft resolution on the chemical weapons Convention during this General Assembly.

While I do not wish to dwell too much on the unfortunate developments of last autumn, it is nevertheless to be recalled that the importance of economic and technological development and international cooperation in the field of peaceful chemical activities is a well-established principle in the Convention. Subjective interpretations of that principle can only become a source of recurrent disputes, especially at a time when we should heed the legitimate concerns of the international community as a whole about the ongoing proliferation of chemical and, for that matter, biological weapons in certain parts of the world. A State that does abide by its international non-proliferation commitments should have no reason to worry about export control regimes. It is self-evident that global norms pertaining to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation on the one hand, and export control regimes on the other, are complementary: one deals with the demand side of proliferation, the other with the supply side. Global normative instruments and export control regimes thus form interlocking parts of the same security policy.

On biological weapons, my Government will actively contribute to forthcoming consultations concerning the strengthening of the biological weapons Convention. The Netherlands looks forward to the early convening of a special conference of States parties to the biological weapons Convention, which should result in a clear mandate to negotiate a verification protocol to the Convention. That protocol should be negotiated in a proper international forum, preferably the Conference on Disarmament. My Government urges States that have not yet done so to request the depositaries of the Convention formally to convene a special conference.

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Despite major international agreements, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction has not stopped. The non-proliferation of nuclear weapons remains one of the most important tasks the international community has set itself. The non-proliferation Treaty, which is to be reviewed and, hopefully, extended indefinitely and unconditionally next year, therefore remains a cornerstone of the security policy of the Netherlands Government. Preparations for this crucial conference are well under way, as could be witnessed during the second PrepCom in New York last week.

My Government is grateful that a number of States have recently decided to, or actually have, become party to the non-proliferation Treaty, thus bringing closer the moment that this Treaty will truly have universal application. The global nature of the Treaty stems also from the nature of nuclear weapons. In this context my Government strongly welcomes the recent trilateral agreement between the United States, Russia and Ukraine which, inter alia, provides for the elimination of all nuclear weapons located in Ukraine. The Ukrainian experience should inspire others. Some States believe that considerations of regional security are not compatible with their adherence to the universal norm of the NPT. However, as examples in Latin America and southern Africa have also shown, tensions which are the root cause of proliferation at the regional level can be dispelled through confidence-building measures. My Government therefore calls on States concerned to pursue vigorously such regional confidence-building measures, with a view to removing incentives to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

The Netherlands attaches priority interest to the negotiation in this year's CD session of a universal and effectively verifiable comprehensive test-ban treaty. Such a treaty would be of great benefit to our non-proliferation efforts and also to the strengthening of the non-proliferation Treaty. The Netherlands delegation therefore warmly welcomes the establishment, in the opening plenary on 25 January last, of an Ad Hoc Committee mandated to negotiate a nuclear test ban. This smooth start augurs well. I express the hope, Mr. President, that under your inspired leadership the CD will also agree without delay on the chairmanship of the Ad Hoc Committee. This is a proper moment to express gratitude to Ambassador Yoshitomo Tanaka of Japan for his commendable performance as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, during both the regular session of the Ad Hoc Committee and the inter-sessional meetings. Thanks to his efforts, we are now in a position to start negotiations as such.

My delegation looks forward to a fruitful general debate on a nuclear test ban, with contributions from all members of the Conference on Disarmament, especially from those delegations that have urged that such a debate take place. A more academic debate on a test ban has gone on in this forum for years. Consequently it will be possible to identify without too much difficulty the basic parameters of a treaty which will command wide adherence and which will provide for an efficient verification regime. I would like to offer a few parameters for such a treaty. First, a test ban must be a comprehensive one: tests of peaceful nuclear explosions should be included in the ban. This should be spelled our unequivocally. A common

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understanding on the scope of the ban is essential if fruitful negotiations are to begin soon. Mere references to certain treaties are not sufficient in the light of the obvious possibility of differences of interpretation of existing treaty texts. Second, precisely because of the obvious non-proliferation aspects, the negotiations should proceed in a climate free of further nuclear testing. As matters stand now the argument that further technical benefits are required before halting all tests is not completely convincing. The present level of technical expertise should be deemed sufficient. Adequate alternatives to testing can be developed further through simulation techniques. Thirdly, the debate must at an early stage focus on the required verification techniques to be negotiated. The ban does not necessarily have to dispose of the whole plethora of such techniques. The ensuing verification measures between them must not be too complex. The CD should make a judicious choice with a view to ensuring that the NTB verification regime becomes effective and manageable from both a technical and a financial point of view. Fourthly, attention will have to be devoted to issues like the proper duration of the future treaty and a sanctions regime to obviate treaty violations. In short, I look forward to a debate which should swiftly determine the prohibition we want to negotiate and the means to effectively verify that ban.

Last year the General Assembly adopted for the first time by consensus a resolution on the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Such a ban can certainly be seen in the light of the success of ongoing non-proliferation efforts. An additional reason for establishing such a ban stems from existing concerns about the release of highly enriched uranium and plutonium as a consequence of nuclear disarmament taking effect. The international community should respond to those concerns. There is a worldwide glut of highly enriched uranium and plutonium. Consequently, there is no further need for their production.

In this regard I have three general observations. First, the non-discriminatory character of a future ban on the production of fissile material should not lead to de facto discrimination between those who have produced in the past and those who have produced only very little or not at all. If there is to be different treatment in view of the past, such treatment should be clear and acceptable to all in the light of existing different international treaty rights and obligations. Second, a "cut-off" treaty should not lead to legitimizing a situation whereby existing stocks can be kept, without such stocks being subject to some form of international control. In other words: threshold States should neither be legitimized nor encouraged to acquire weapons-grade material shortly before a "cut-off" treaty comes into force. This is a delicate aspect which must be looked at very carefully. My Government wishes to encourage discussions and other efforts aimed at establishing reliable and transparent mechanisms to manage the globally existing stocks of plutonium. Efforts to that effect both in Vienna and in Geneva should go hand in hand. Thirdly, to be effective, verification will have to be focused on those facilities which give real cause for concern. For the negotiation of the verification regime of a future "cut-off", a high level of technical knowledge and experience will be needed. It is clear that one should make the best possible use of existing resources to elaborate

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proper and effective verification provisions. To that end, again, the assistance of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna should be sought as and when required.

As for the handling of this subject, the Conference on Disarmament is the proper forum to negotiate a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Whereas it has not been possible to have an Ad Hoc Committee established for the negotiation of a "cut-off" treaty right away, my delegation notes the intention of our President to appoint a special coordinator for this issue. Hopefully, that approach will prove to be helpful.

Let me now turn to what in the view of the Netherlands delegation is the most important area of conventional disarmament the Conference has to deal with in 1994: transparency in armaments. The history of transparency in armaments, and notably the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, is by now well known. With the establishment of the Register, the General Assembly requested the CD to address a number of aspects of openness and transparency in armaments. In order to deal with these requests the Conference at the beginning of its 1993 session established the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments. Under the able leadership of Ambassador Mounir Zahran, who in 1992 had served as a special coordinator for transparency in armaments, the Ad Hoc Committee in 1993 held 15 meetings in the course of which a great amount of new ground was covered and many views were expressed on the General Assembly's requests.

From its report, we learn that the Ad Hoc Committee conducted a substantive exchange of views on a number of complex issues surrounding the subject of transparency in armaments. Also, a number of interesting thoughts and proposals were expressed on the present and future functioning of the Register, for instance that States should start exchanging information on military holdings and procurement through national production and the proposal that States could make an annual declaration to the United Nations on the size and organization of their forces. However, no consensus recommendations could be reached as to any of these proposals. The fact that an Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments has been re-established holds out promising prospects for sustaining and expanding the progress made in Geneva last year. The CD should apply some urgency here, since, outside Geneva, the work of the CD will have to be taken into account by the 1994 Group of Governmental Experts on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.

The fact that the Register is widely supported was reflected in the adoption by an overwhelming majority of resolution 46/36 L, which established the Register, and the consensus by which resolutions on transparency in armaments and the Register were adopted in the subsequent years. The broad support for the Register was further evidenced by the satisfying level of participation by United Nations Member States over the first operational year of the Register, 1992. During the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, a report of the Secretary-General was published (A/48/344) which lists 80 national returns. More returns have come in since.

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The Netherlands considers this to be a good and promising start. The public data now available through the Register create transparency in conventional arms transfers and thus effectively contribute to building confidence among the community of States. Here, I would say we are faced with a critical innovation, if not a quantum leap to greater trust. The data, being government-supplied, obtain official status. Not only is existing knowledge on arms transfers confirmed and supplemented, but the returns to the Register also qualify henceforth as objects for official government-to-government communications.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations has bestowed the honour upon the Netherlands to chair the New York Group of Governmental Experts to which I just referred. It will meet three times between February and August 1994, and has the important task to assist the Secretary-General in preparing a report on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development. In doing so the Group of Experts will have to take into account, inter alia, the work of our Conference on the issue. However, the Group derives its mandate from resolution 46/36 L and consequently remains directly responsible to the General Assembly and the Secretary-General. The report of the Group of Governmental Experts will be submitted to the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. It goes without saying that the Netherlands is fully prepared to continue its contribution to the efforts the United Nations and the Conference on Disarmament undertake to enhance the transparency drive. Greater transparency contributes to building confidence and trust among States and increases stability in all regions of the world. It also holds out the prospect of undiminished security at the lowest possible level of armaments. Transparency thereby enables nations to make more adequate use of scarce socio-economic resources in a more secure world. It is in a secure environment that investment flourishes.

In the opening plenary on 25 January last, the Conference on Disarmament decided on the re-establishment of its ad hoc committees. I congratulate you, Mr. President, on this resolute start.

None the less, a note of caution seems warranted. My delegation has always been reluctant to establish ad hoc committees which subsequently prove to be less than productive. I believe that delegations should seriously look at ways by which for example the Ad Hoc Committee on negative security assurances could conduct its work in a more meaningful manner. It was for years the only Ad Hoc Committee that, besides the Ad Hoc Committee for chemical weapons, had a clear negotiating mandate. The international situation has however substantially changed. The security assurances recently extended to Ukraine are a case in point. The conditions for having a fresh look at possible converging elements in the various assurances have never been better.

As for substance, it is my Government's position that on the one hand there should be a willingness to go beyond national interests and look at ways and means of aligning the various negative security assurances in a realistic way. On the other hand, such assurances have to be seen in the light of ongoing non-proliferation efforts. The alignment of negative security

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assurances could eventually take shape either through an agreement or through a mandatory Security Council resolution. To each of the present negative security assurances pertains an element of conditionality. It is not realistic to expect that any of them will ever be unconditional. Indeed, negative security assurances could only become unconditional at the risk of diminishing security rather than enhancing it. One cannot expect a negative security assurance to be valid against a State which flouts its non-proliferation commitment, that is to say engages in activities which could transform it into a potential nuclear-weapon State. None of the present assurances is valid in a conflict under such circumstances anyhow.

Last but not least, I would like to say a few words on the subject of the expansion of membership of our Conference. Presently, it is difficult to imagine a compromise solution acceptable to all. The efforts of your predecessor, Ambassador Zahran, and those of the Special Coordinator, Ambassador Paul O'Sullivan, testify to the intricacy of the issue. The Ambassador of Mexico submitted an intriguing new proposal on 25 January last. It is the conviction of my delegation that the CD will have to adapt and to expand if it wants to shed its old remnants of bipolarity and become a truly multilateral and representative negotiating body, fit to help complete the arms control and disarmament agenda of the 1990s. I submit that an enlarged CD membership obtains critical relevance in negotiating a nuclear test ban and in ensuring widespread commitment to the eventual treaty.

The Netherlands indicated last year its agreement with - and preferences for - a range of solutions. I will not repeat them now. I emphasize, however, that the membership issue is one of high priority. The nomination of a new special coordinator, as is the intention of our President, is a bare necessity. The overall importance of this question, however, warrants the continued attention of the CD presidency. The membership issue must and can be solved quickly. I urge expediency and flexibility.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of the Netherlands for his statement. I am grateful to him for his cordial remarks addressed to me, by which I was particularly touched. I now give the floor to the representative of Germany, Ambassador Hoffmann.

Mr. HOFFMANN (Germany): Mr. President, first of all I should like to congratulate you most sincerely upon your assumption of the responsible task of being this year's first President, a task you discharge so competently. We are all aware that the first President of any CD session carries a special responsibility for bringing the Conference to substantive work. We have full confidence in you; we are sure that the CD will overcome its procedural phase very soon. In this regard and in all other regards, you may rest assured of the full cooperation of the German delegation. Mr. President, let me also echo the welcome extended by the previous speaker to new colleagues on all sides of the Council chamber.

The Conference on Disarmament is the only multilateral body to negotiate universally applicable arms control and disarmament treaties. If it wants to meet its universal role more effectively, the Conference on Disarmament should

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extend its membership as soon as possible. In principle all States wishing to participate in the CD should have a right to do so. Unfortunately, the efforts made to extend membership have not yet been successful. From the German point of view, the proposed O'Sullivan extension package is still a sound and useful formula. However, we are flexible and would welcome any other initiative which has the potential to establish consensus within the CD at an early date.

A comprehensive test-ban treaty will be the core issue of this year's deliberations of the CD. I wish to congratulate Ambassador Tanaka on his untiring efforts as the Chairman of last year's nuclear test ban Ad Hoc Committee to provide the CD with a mandate and the organizational outline to negotiate such a treaty. My Government, as outlined in Foreign Minister Kinkel's 10-point initiative on non-proliferation, has long advocated a comprehensive, verifiable nuclear test ban. We believe that such a treaty is important in terms of both nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament policy. An advanced negotiating process on a comprehensive test ban would also have a positive influence on the climate for an indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995. We should do our best to achieve negotiating results by 1995. Today I will not deal at length with the structure and contents of the envisaged treaty. I will content myself with a few remarks. In our understanding, with a view to strengthening and developing the international non-proliferation regime, the scope of a nuclear test ban should not only comprise the nuclear explosion as such. Rather, it should also include preparatory or assisting activities directly preceding nuclear explosions. We advocate an effective international and universal verification regime, which should be able to respond to this scope of a nuclear test ban. A verification regime based merely on seismological data could only cover a nuclear explosion after it has taken place. This will not be sufficient. We should invest some more efforts in finding out which verification technologies for which environment are most appropriate for that purpose. Any verification regime we develop should meet the requirements of universal acceptability, feasibility and affordability. We will also have to deal with possible non-compliance with the treaty and, to this end, on-site inspections will be of paramount interest.

A convention banning manufacture of fissionable material for weapon purposes, the so-called cut-off convention, will be of particular importance in the context of non-proliferation. We welcomed the American proposals made in this regard. In our view, the Conference on Disarmament would - due to its universal representation and vast negotiating experience - be the appropriate forum for the negotiation of such a convention. Despite the full programme of work which lies before us, we should make sufficient time available to start negotiation of such a treaty before the end of this year. At the same time, maximum use should be made of the expertise of other organizations, such as IAEA.

Apart from the nuclear test ban Ad Hoc Committee, which for obvious reasons will be the most important committee this year, we welcome the speedy re-establishment of all other ad hoc committees.

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My Government holds the view that effective international arrangements to secure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons are by themselves a justified request. The outcome of our deliberations on this subject could have considerable influence on the forthcoming NPT extension conference in 1995. In accordance with the corresponding resolution adopted with only three abstentions by last year's United Nations General Assembly in New York, we should make every effort to find a consensus-reaching formula that could be included in an international instrument of a legally binding character.

As to transparency in armaments, last year's Ad Hoc Committee conducted a substantive exchange of views on how to respond to the request of the United Nations General Assembly in 1992 that openness and transparency in this field be further increased. A number of proposals were presented. We expect that constructive efforts be undertaken to continue this important task in the relevant Ad Hoc Committee. Furthermore, we are looking forward to the activities of the group of governmental experts in New York, under the able guidance of Ambassador Wagenmakers, which aim to assess the operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and put forward proposals for its further development.

I take the view that, as mentioned in the German 10-point initiative on non-proliferation, transparency in armaments should not be limited to conventional arms. There should be considerations for enhancing transparency in the field of nuclear weapons as well. The idea of a nuclear-weapon register or a register on nuclear disarmament aims towards strengthening international confidence in nuclear disarmament. Such a register may be a possible complement to the confidence-building policy we helped to implement when establishing the Register of conventional weapons at the United Nations. I look forward to the continuation of this debate in this year's Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments.

Finally, in the field of prevention of an arms race in outer space, we have to remind ourselves that the Ad Hoc Committee on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space still lacks a negotiating mandate. I take the position that this year's Ad Hoc Committee could explore in a step-by-step approach possible avenues for the negotiation of an agreement on confidence-building measures and that it should make every effort to start discussing a negotiating mandate soon.

A huge amount of work lies before us, but we have the chance to lay the foundations for a whole set of treaties that have a bearing on nuclear non-proliferation. It will depend on us whether the Conference on Disarmament plays the prominent role it should have in this context.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French). I thank the representative of Germany for his statement and the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Ukraine, Ambassador Slipchenko.

Mr. SLIPCHENKO (Ukraine): Mr. President, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate you on the assumption of these extremely important functions. I would also like to extend my greetings to Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky in his new capacity as Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, as well as to his newly appointed deputy, Mr. Bensmail.

The Conference on Disarmament has commenced its 1994 session being faced with a set of challenges it has to meet in order to prove its ability to provide adequate responses to the most acute questions in the field of disarmament and international security. While concentrating the efforts of the participating States on the areas where real progress can be made and tangible results can be obtained relatively soon, the Conference must not, however, lose track of its ultimate purpose and ensure continuity of the disarmament process. By the same token, acknowledging the significance of a CTBT as a priority item on the agenda of the 1994 session of the CD and its direct link to the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime, we regard non-proliferation as a part of this process rather than a means of the mere securing of the status quo.

In their recent joint declaration President Leonid Kravchuk of Ukraine and President Nursultan Nazarbayev of the Republic of Kazakhstan stressed that "Ukraine and Kazakhstan, which have voluntarily chosen the path of getting rid of nuclear arms, the most lethal weapon in human history, cannot but feel deep concern over their security, which they do not imagine out of the universal international security context. It is against this background that the tripartite statement by the Presidents of Ukraine, the United States of America and Russia signed in Moscow on 14 January 1994 bears special significance. The tripartite summit reaffirmed once again the usefulness and desirability of compromise, as well as testifying to the futility and counter-productivity of confrontation. It consummated a long period of sometimes arduous preparatory political and diplomatic work, including intensive debate to the Ukrainian Parliament.

The content of the tripartite statement has de facto proved the validity of Ukrainian concerns related to the process of its relinquishing the nuclear arsenal inherited from the former USSR and deployed on its territory. In the course of negotiations the parties involved managed to work out a common approach which makes it possible to take fuller account of the national interests of Ukraine. This embraces national security guarantees, and we note with satisfaction the readiness of the Government of the United Kingdom to offer Ukraine the same security guarantees as the United States of America and Russia, fair compensation for fissionable materials contained in the nuclear warheads, and economic, financial and technical aid to Ukraine to cope with the formidable job of eliminating nuclear weaponry. In this connection we share the opinion expressed by Mr. J. Holum, Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, at the opening plenary meeting of the CD that while opening up the way to the elimination of nuclear weapons, the tripartite statement should help establish a pattern of stable political relationships.

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In the same spirit President Leonid Kravchuk of Ukraine stressed, after the signing of the statement, that "Ukraine de-blocked the process of nuclear disarmament. Ukraine has proved that it was not following some special paths, but it has embarked upon the road of civilization and the interest of humankind. This is most important for the European and international communities."

My country, which was the first to put forward a productive idea of tripartite negotiations, has consistently demonstrated political will to look for juridical formulas and technical arrangements acceptable to all parties involved, and to establish a reliable international mechanism for addressing the practical problems of nuclear disarmament.

Ukraine was guided by these very considerations when presenting the idea of the establishment of an international fund for promoting nuclear disarmament in Ukraine, which has already been voiced in different international forums, including the CD and the forty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly. A draft agreement on the creation of the fund elaborated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine provides for its conclusion on a bilateral or multilateral basis. The fund is designed as a primarily intergovernmental organization, which would use its financial resources for the purpose of the destruction of nuclear weapons, including ensuring the ecological safety of this process, and providing employment for the professionals working in corresponding industries, thus precluding their outflow to other countries. The draft agreement envisages broad privileges and immunities for the participants in the fund and its foreign employees, openness of the activities of the fund, and scope for the donor countries to exercise control over the use of their financial contributions.

The active role played by the Ukrainian leadership in bringing about the tripartite statement is evident proof of my country's determination to honour its commitments and to make a constructive contribution to the international efforts aimed at making this world a safer place to live. This definitely applies as well to its participation in the work of the multilateral negotiating bodies of which the Conference on Disarmament is considered by us as one of the most authoritative and important. Hence it is our desire - together with other countries - to become a full member of the Conference. We also hope that the painful experience which is being accumulated by our State in the process of its denuclearization can be helpful in working out solutions and recommendations on the matters being currently treated within the framework of the CD. In this connection we would pay special attention to the agenda item on effective arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

The inability of the Conference to find a positive solution to the membership expansion problem - notwithstanding resolution 48/77B of the forty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly - not only blocks full-scale participation of the countries which wish to be and can be its active members. It also puts certain limits on the activities of the Conference itself, especially now when the Conference is about to start

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negotiating a CTBT designed as a document of truly universal character. The very process of work on the CTBT calls for the involvement of all States in possession of the "threshold" level of nuclear technologies in particular the USSR successor States which have nuclear weapons deployed on their territory. It should also be taken into account that consensus on resolution 48/77B in its part concerning allocation of additional resources for the work of the CD was reached only on the presumption that the expansion will take place at an early stage. It is with this understanding that we support the proposal tabled by the distinguished Ambassador of Mexico at the first plenary meeting of the 1994 session, regarding the date of 31 March 1994 mentioned in this draft decision as one by which the positive resolution of the problem of the CD membership expansion should be achieved.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of Ukraine for his statement and his kind remarks addressed to me. I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt, Ambassador Zahran, who will present his report on the consultations carried out during the inter-sessional period, followed by a statement on behalf of his country.

Mr. ZAHRAN (Egypt) (translated from French): Allow me first of all, Sir, to express to you my sincere congratulations on the occasion of your taking up the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament during this crucial phase at the beginning of the Conference's session, this difficult phase of preparing for its activities in 1994. With your talent and your energy, I am sure that you will be able to steer the work of the Conference effectively.

(continued in English)

I wish also to take this opportunity of extending a warm welcome to the new Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, whose personal knowledge of disarmament matters and vast experience in multilateral diplomacy will certainly be an asset to our Conference. In addition, I have pleasure in extending my congratulations to Mr. Abdelkader Bensmail on his promotion to the post of Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference and Chief of the Geneva branch of the Centre for Disarmament Affairs. Mr. Bensmail is known to all of us and I am sure we will all benefit from his long and valuable experience in the Conference. I should like also to join others in welcoming our colleagues who have just joined us, namely Ambassador Yousuf Omar of Ethiopia, Ambassador Hocine Meghlaoui of Algeria, Ambassador Juan Carlos Sánchez Arnau of Argentina, Ambassador Alfredo Tarre Murzi of Venezuela and Ambassador Alessandro Vattani of Italy, and assure them of the cooperation of my delegation in their new responsibilities.

I am taking the floor today in order to inform the Conference on Disarmament on the activities and consultations I have undertaken on its behalf since the plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament 3 September 1993. Following the decision of our previous Secretary-General, Ambassador Berasategui, to resign from his post, I was requested by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to consult the members of the

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Conference on the appointment of a new Secretary-General as well as of a Deputy Secretary-General. As a result of these consultations, the Secretary-General of the United Nations decided to appoint Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky as Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative, on an interim basis, in addition to his current functions and responsibilities as Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, and Mr. Abdelkader Bensmail as Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament.

In addition, I had the honour to introduce, on your behalf, the annual report of the Conference on Disarmament on its work during the 1993 session to the First Committee of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. I highlighted then the significance of the decision taken by the Conference on 10 August 1993 giving its Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban a mandate to negotiate a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. I also had the privilege of conducting intensive consultations on the elaboration of the draft resolution in the First Committee on the report of the Conference on Disarmament. It is a source of satisfaction that this resolution, which, inter alia, welcomes the determination of the Conference to fulfil its role as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community in the light of the evolving international situation with a view to making early substantive progress on priority items on its agenda, was adopted by consensus.

Moreover, in conformity with the decision contained in paragraph 15 of the annual report of the Conference on Disarmament to the General Assembly (CD/1222), I have conducted consultations with the aim of reaching consensus on the expansion of membership of the Conference. In this regard, I have led several rounds of consultations with the groups and individual members of the Conference in order to bring about a solution acceptable to all. During these consultations, I presented a number of formulas, inter alia the proposal put forward by Ambassador Paul O'Sullivan of Australia (CD/1214) and a proposal to accept all those non-member States which had applied for membership up to 3 September 1993, as well as different variants thereof. However, I regret that, despite all these efforts and continuous consultations in the inter-sessional period here in Geneva and in New York, it has not proven possible to achieve consensus on this important issue and, therefore, further efforts will be required by the Conference, which may consider appointing a new special coordinator to conduct further consultations with the members of the Conference to achieve that objective.

While in New York I also met, on behalf of the Conference on Disarmament, with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, with the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Marrack Goulding, and with the Disarmament Centre, with whom I discussed the need to provide additional human and financial resources to the disarmament secretariat which would, in turn, impact positively on the work of the Conference on Disarmament as a whole specially in light of the current crucial phase and responsibilities of the Conference. The reaction which I received was positive.

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Furthermore, in preparation for the 1994 session of the Conference, in close cooperation and consultation with you, Mr. President, and with the assistance of the secretariat, I conducted several rounds of consultations with group coordinators and the delegation of China, in order to ensure a smooth transition and preparation of the work of the new session of the Conference on Disarmament. Various issues of importance to the work of the Conference were addressed during these consultations. These include, inter alia, the agenda and organization of work for this year; the establishment of ad hoc committees on items on the agenda; their mandates and chairmanships; as well as the most appropriate organizational arrangements to deal with various other issues before the Conference. I am happy to say that these consultations, in which all groups displayed a remarkable spirit of compromise and mutual cooperation, have resulted in a state of affairs which I am sure will be conducive to a very early start to the substantive work of the Conference on Disarmament.

I would now like to make a brief statement on behalf of Egypt on some of the issues of importance to my country on disarmament matters at the global as well as the regional level.

For several decades now, Egypt has been a staunch supporter of the cause of nuclear disarmament. Egypt is a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and is at the origin of numerous initiatives in this field. Emanating from this position, Egypt learned with satisfaction that during 1993 several nuclear-weapons States declared moratoria on nuclear testing. It is our hope that the near future will see a definitive end to all nuclear text explosions. It is therefore with great expectation that we look forward to participating actively in the negotiations in the nuclear test ban Ad Hoc Committee, which we believe must be given primary priority so that it may move promptly in 1994 towards concluding a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty.

While we attribute priority to the nuclear test ban we must not, however, neglect other issues of high importance such as NSA. It is our view that existing positive security assurances are insufficient and that they must be developed into comprehensive positive as well as negative security assurances through a legally binding instrument.

The issue of cut-offs in the production of fissionable materials is also one which we consider can greatly contribute to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and one which must be pursued seriously and vigorously. The CD is the appropriate negotiating forum to deal with this issue. However, positive as it is, the resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its 1993 forty-eighth session on this issue stops short of dealing with existing stocks.

With the rapidly approaching 1995 NPT review and extension conference it is important for us to stress again the positive influence that a concluded CTBT and comprehensive NSAs would have on the successful outcome of this

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conference. Bearing this in mind we cannot but stress the dire need to conclude a CTBT in 1994 and to achieve significant progress in the field of NSAs.

Since 1974 Egypt has been one of the original sponsors of the annual resolution adopted by the General Assembly on the establishment of a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Middle East. In 1990 President Mubarak of Egypt launched another initiative for the establishment of a zone free from all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Given this commitment to nuclear disarmament, Egypt is indeed satisfied by the significant and rapid progress being made on the drafting of a treaty or convention on the long-overdue denuclearization of Africa.

It was as far back as 1964, when the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity was meeting in Cairo, that the Cairo Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa was adopted. For more than 30 years now a series of resolutions have been regularly adopted both by the General Assembly of the United Nations and by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity calling upon States to consider and respect the continent of Africa and its surrounding areas as a nuclear-weapon-free zone and calling for the implementation of OAU's Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa. This issue will also be one of the items on the provisional agenda of the upcoming meeting of the Council of Ministers of OAU, which will start in Addis Ababa on 31 January 1994.

In its most recent resolutions, the General Assembly has indeed called upon the Secretary-General, in consultation with OAU, "to take appropriate action to enable the Group of Experts designated by the United Nations in cooperation with OAU to meet". Three such meetings have indeed taken place, most recently from 5 to 8 April 1993 in Harare. During this meeting significant drafting work was undertaken and two upcoming expert meetings during 1994 will undoubtedly bring the text closer to its final conclusion.

It is Egypt's hope that all African States and all extra-African States which will necessarily have to be involved in this endeavour will fully cooperate to facilitate the conclusion of the treaty and will fully accept its provisions as well as those of its protocols.

As a further expression of Egypt's firm commitment to the early conclusion of a treaty on the establishment in Africa of a nuclear-weapon-free zone, it gives me pleasure to announce today that the Government of Egypt offers to host the signing ceremony of the said treaty.

Finally, I must say in ending Egypt's long presidency of the Conference on Disarmament that I wish to place on record my deep appreciation to all delegations for the support they have extended to me during the past months. I also wish you, Mr. President and friend, Ambassador Errera, the very best of luck in your endeavours and wish to assure you once again of my continued cooperation and support in pursuit of our common goal.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank Ambassador Zahran. On behalf of all of you I would like to convey to him once again our warmest thanks for the tireless efforts he made during his term of office. I also thank him for the kind words he addressed to me and his wishes to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Senegal, Ambassador Ka.

Mr. KA (Senegal) (translated from French): As I am addressing the Conference on Disarmament for the first time as Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Senegal, allow me at the outset to assure this august forum of the wholehearted concern and readiness of my delegation to cooperate in the interests of the realization of the noble objectives that this Conference has set itself. Mr. President, I would like to tell you how agreeable it is for me to take the floor today under your presidency. You represent a State, France, with which my country, Senegal, has always maintained firm relations of cooperation which have been mutually beneficial in every respect. I am sure that under your guidance the Conference will obtain tangible results thanks to your human qualities, your wisdom and your skill as a distinguished diplomat. Allow me also to take this opportunity to thank my brother and friend, Ambassador Mounir Zahran of Egypt, for the skill and leadership with which he presided over the Conference on Disarmament during his term of office. Finally, I wish to pay tribute to the outstanding qualities of the new Secretary-General of the Conference, to our brother, Mr. Abdelkader Bensmail, the Deputy Secretary-General, and through them to the United Nations Secretary-General for the excellent report submitted to the Conference.

I thought I was going to be able to address my colleagues here as representative of a State that was a full member of this Conference. But I feel great regret and also disappointment at seeing that, despite United Nations General Assembly resolution 48/77B requesting the Conference to reach a consensus on the expansion of its membership before the 1994 session, no satisfactory solution has yet been found to this question. My country, Senegal, which submitted its request for admission in 1982 and has always participated in the work of the Conference as an observer, has never ceased to emphasize that the question of the expansion of the Conference urgently demands a decision.

Senegal has always thought that the Conference on Disarmament should be open to all States that wish to be part of it and have specifically expressed their interest, conviction and commitment with regard to disarmament. The conclusive results of the work carried out by Ambassador O'Sullivan of Australia, special coordinator on this question at the time, had raised hopes that unfortunately were quickly dashed. This situation is all the more regrettable since at the end of the twentieth century the world has experienced such upheavals that it has become even more necessary to adjust our views, approaches and methods of work ir a field that is so crucial as that of collective security. First of all, the tensions of the cold war have disappeared. Current threats are more due to regional instability, the spillovers from ethnic and religious struggles and the upsurge of nationalist sentiment. The threats to international peace and security stemming from

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non-military sources of instability were clearly recognized by the Security Council in the declaration issued at the end of the summit meeting of 31 January 1992.

The present international climate, dominated on the one hand by positive signs that point to great possibilities and great hopes for general and complete disarmament and on the other hand by challenges and serious threats to international peace and security, impels us to unite our efforts with a view to completely putting an end to nuclear testing, the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the use or threat of use of these weapons of mass destruction. If profound changes have now markedly altered relations between States and have led to opportunities for building peace and security on cooperation and détente in several regions of the world, nevertheless real threats have re-emerged and have become a source of increasing concern to the international community.

The objective that we are all striving towards in the long term is to reduce levels of armament and to establish confidence by means of legal instruments of disarmament that would be binding both at the world level and at the regional level. Because the achievement of this noble objective demands the efforts and the political will of all actors in the international system, Senegal would like to be able to participate fully in this exciting undertaking. For this reason, we view the expansion of the Conference on Disarmament as necessary especially at a time when the question of the expansion of other very important bodies in the United Nations system is being studied elsewhere with a view to revitalizing them and ensuring that they reflect the changes that have occurred in the geopolitical scene. My country, for its part, in agreement with the 22 other States that were recommended in the report of the Conference on Disarmament to the United Nations General Assembly (CD/1222) for full membership of the Conference, will spare no effort to attain this objective and help the Conference respond to present and future challenges. We hope that the proposal made here on 25 January by the distinguished Ambassador of Mexico concerning this question of expansion will receive the support of all the members of the Conference.

The PRESIDENT, (translated from French): I thank the representative of Senegal for his statement. I also thank him for the warm words that he addressed to my country and to me, which I appreciate greatly. I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina, Ambassador Sánchez Arnau.

Mr. SANCHEZ ARNAU (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): Allow me at the outset to express my genuine satisfaction at the opportunity to address this plenary of the Conference for the first time and to express my gratitude for the kind words of welcome I have received. It is for us an honour to do so under the presidency of the French Republic. Your presidency, Ambassador Errera, is a guarantee of efficiency and impartiality and we commit ourselves to cooperate loyally with you in your efforts to make progress in the work of the Conference. At the same time, I would like to extend a welcome on behalf of my Government to Ambassador Vladimir Petrovsky, as Secretary-General of the Conference. His experience in negotiations on

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disarmament and arms control will constitute an important contribution to the work of the Conference at a very special juncture in its history. We are also convinced that in Abdelkader Bensmail he will have a colleague whose abilities are commensurate with the tasks ahead of us.

One year after giving the community of nations such a crucial instrument for international security as the chemical weapons Convention, the Conference on Disarmament is now preparing to tackle a new challenge in the shape of the negotiation of the comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. Argentina is ready to participate intensively in these negotiations, with the objective of concluding in the shortest possible time an instrument capable of generating the necessary confidence in the effective enforcement of the definitive prohibition of nuclear test explosions. This attitude taken by my country is related to two important developments in Argentina's foreign policy, which have a direct bearing on the work of our Conference. The first of these is very recent. On the occasion of the eighth special session of the General Conference of OPANAL, held in Mexico City on 18 January 1994, the Argentine Republic deposited with the Mexican Government the instruments of ratification of and the waivers to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco), as amended in 1990, 1991 and 1992. This marks the culmination of a process initiated just over two years ago when the Government of Dr. Carlos Saúl Menem took the decision to bring our security and non-proliferation policy into line with a world that had undergone profound changes. This decision by the Argentine executive branch was endorsed by the National Congress, which in less than a year adopted a favourable view and approved the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the amendments to it. As a result the Treaty of Tlatelolco is now fully in force for the Argentine Republic. We hope that in a very short time enough countries will accede to the Treaty so that the prohibition of nuclear weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean becomes a reality.

Secondly, my Government has announced its intention to begin taking the necessary steps towards accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in the course of 1994. For us this decision is the logical corollary of a series of initiatives we have been taking consistently in recent years, among them the joint efforts we have made, and are continuing to make, with the Republic of Brazil in the nuclear field, as well as with Chile and other Latin American countries in this and other facets of the security of our region.

As we have seen, the responsibilities of the Conference on Disarmament, far from decreasing, are acquiring more importance and substance in these times. This requires from all of us a very special effort and the need to tackle the substantive work with no further delays. Hence we express the hope that we will be able very soon to complete the procedural aspects related to the establishment of the ad hoc committees so as to get down to the work which the international community has entrusted to us.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of Argentina for his statement and I also thank him for the very kind remarks he addressed to me. We have now come to the end of the list of speakers for today. Would any other representative like to take the floor at this stage?

As I announced, I would now like to invite the Conference to consider the new requests for participation in our work from the following non-member States: Bangladesh, Colombia, Denmark, Jordan, Kuwait, Slovenia, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates. The secretariat has distributed today, with the symbol CD/WP.451, a note from the Chair containing these requests. During the consultations I have been holding, there has been no objection to these requests. In the circumstances, I propose that we adopt the recommendation contained in document CD/WP.451 directly in plenary, it being understood that this will not constitute a precedent for future occasions where an informal meeting might be necessary. May I take it that the Conference takes a decision to this effect?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): Before adjourning this plenary meeting, I would like to inform the Conference that the consultations with a view to completing the consideration of matters relating to the organization of our session, in particular those concerning the chairmen of the committees and the appointment of special coordinators, are continuing in an intensive manner. I hope that with cooperation from all sides we will arrive at an agreement on these issues very shortly.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday, 1 February 1994 at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.